

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-24 (cancelled)

25. (currently amended) A microcrystalline paraffin, prepared by hydroisomerizing, at temperatures above 200°C, FT (Fischer-Tropsch) paraffins having a carbon chain length distribution in the range from 20 to 105, by processing the FT paraffins with a catalyst ~~based on a beta-zeolite,~~ the catalyst comprising:

60 to 95% by mass of zeolite of the beta type, based on the combination of all components fired at 800°C, 5 to 39.8% by mass of gamma-aluminum oxide having a specific surface area of 150-350 m²/g, calculated as Al₂O₃ and based on the combination of all components fired at 800°C, and one or more metals of transition group 8 of the periodic table, in an amount of 0.2 to 2.0% by mass, based on the combination of all components fired at 800°C, the one or more transition group 8 metals being attached to the gamma-aluminum oxide, wherein the zeolite does not contain any of the one or more transition group 8 metals.

26. (previously presented) The microcrystalline paraffin according to claim 25, wherein, at 25°C the paraffin is not liquid but at least paste-like to solid with a needle penetration value of less than 100 x 10⁻¹ mm, measured in accordance with DIN 51579.

27. (previously presented) The microcrystalline paraffin according to claim 25, wherein the paraffin is free of aromatic and heterocyclic compounds.

28. (previously presented) The microcrystalline paraffin according to claim 25, wherein the paraffin is free of naphthenes.

29. (previously presented) The microcrystalline paraffin according to claim 25, having a proportion by weight of isoalkanes that is greater than that of n-alkanes in the paraffin.

30. (cancelled)

31. (currently amended) Process for preparing a microcrystalline paraffin by catalytic hydroisomerization comprising:

processing FT (Fischer-Tropsch) paraffins, as a starting material, having carbon atoms in the range from 20 to 105;

in the presence of a catalyst ~~based on a β -zeolite~~;

wherein the process is conducted at a temperature above 200°C, and

at a pressure in a range of 2 to 20 MPa in the presence of hydrogen;

wherein the catalyst comprises 60 to 95% by mass of zeolite of the beta type, based on the combination of all components fired at 800°C, 5 to 39.8% by mass of gamma-aluminum oxide having a specific surface area of 150-350 m²/g, calculated as Al₂O₃ and based on the combination of all components fired at 800°C, and one or more metals of transition group 8 of the periodic table, in an amount of 0.1 to 2.0% by mass, based on the combination of all components fired at 800°C, the one or more transition group 8 metals being attached to the gamma-aluminum oxide, wherein the zeolite does not contain any of the one or more transition group 8 metals.

32. (previously presented) Process according to claim 31, wherein the β -zeolite further comprises pores comprising a pore size between 0.50 and 0.80 nm.

33. (cancelled)

34. (cancelled)

35. (cancelled)

36. (previously presented) Process according to claim 31, wherein the pressure is 3 to 8 Mpa.

37. (previously presented) Process according to claim 31, wherein the process is conducted at a temperature of 230 to 270°C.

38. (previously presented) Process according to claim 31, wherein the hydrogen is fed to the paraffin, in a feed ratio of hydrogen to FT paraffin from 100:1 to 2000:1 standard m³ per m³.

39. (previously presented) Process according to claim 31, wherein the hydrogen is fed to the paraffin, in a feed ratio of hydrogen to FT paraffin from 250:1 to 600:1 standard m³ per m³.

40. (previously presented) Process according claim 31, wherein the process is carried out at a loading from 0.1 to 2.0 v/vh.

41. (previously presented) Process according to claim 32, wherein the catalyst has a pore size between 0.55 to 0.76 nm.

42. (cancelled)

43. (previously presented) Process according to claim 31, wherein the one or more metals of transition group 8 of the Periodic Table comprises platinum.

44. (previously presented) Process according to claim 43, wherein the platinum content of the catalyst is 0.2 to 2.0% by mass, based on a catalyst fired at 800°C.

45. (previously presented) Process according to claim 31, wherein the FT paraffins have a solidification point ranging from 70 to 105°C.

46. (previously presented) Process according to claim 31, wherein the microcrystalline paraffin is prepared from the FT paraffins in a single process step.

Claims 47-50 (cancelled)

51. (previously presented) Process according claim 31, wherein the process is carried out at a loading from 0.2 to 0.8 v/vh.

52. (previously presented) Process according to claim 43, wherein the platinum content of the catalyst is 0.4 to 1.0% by mass, based on a catalyst fired at 800°C.

53. (previously presented) Process according to claim 45, wherein the FT paraffins have solidification points of 70, 80, 95 or 105°C.

54. (previously presented) Process according to claim 46, wherein the microcrystalline paraffins are prepared from the FT paraffins in a single process step, with removal of the short chain constituents.